

NSC BRIEFING

30 November 1960

LAOS

- I. Laos moving closer to all-out civil war.
- A. Phoumi began offensive against Vientiane troops--mainly Kong Le's paratroopers--on 28 November.
1. First actions against paratroopers' forward positions about 100 miles southeast of Vientiane: Kong Le claims Phoumi forces repulsed with losses.
 2. Pathet Lao collaborating with Vientiane forces in this area:
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- B. Meanwhile, Souvanna Phouma's forces, probably with Pathet Lao elements, moving north toward Luang Prabang.
1. Strength of this force reduced by defection of one column to Phoumi.
 2. Souvanna's ability take Luang Prabang--as often threatened--thus reduced.
- II. On political scene, efforts to unseat Souvanna Phouma continue.
- A. His opponents maneuvering for National Assembly session outside Vientiane; only about ten deputies need to escape from Vientiane to permit organization of quorum outside capital.
- B. Were Assembly to vote Souvanna out, King could appoint new premier acceptable to anti-Communists.
1. This would probably lead to violent Pathet Lao reaction threatening occupation of Vientiane.

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2. Seems more likely, however, that Souvanna would refuse to bow out claiming that ouster made under duress.

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III. Meanwhile, Souvanna moving to attract more Sino-Soviet bloc support.

A. Arrangements made to send good-will mission to Peiping and Hanoi.

Souvanna will head mission,

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